

Where is the Woman who doesn't know A Modern Glenwood "Makes Cooking Easy"

REYNOLDS & SON, BARRE.

Sidewheel Dawson's Pardon.

By D. H. TALMAGE.

Mr. Dawson's "fin" was weary from vigorous shaking, his back was sore from repeated slaps, his neck was chafed by the collar to which it had long been a stranger, but his state of mind was one of most excellent satisfaction.

A man who had been sentenced to twenty years of hard labor in the penitentiary and who comes forth free and in the full possession of his health at the end of five is certainly entitled to some satisfaction. That was precisely what had happened to Mr. Dawson. He had killed his man under circumstances so unusual that he had been pardoned. He had killed his man under circumstances so unusual that he had been pardoned. He had killed his man under circumstances so unusual that he had been pardoned.

"That's worth while," Mr. Dawson had said to his attorney. "I would do more harm than good for any of my friends to testify to the gentleness of my disposition. Snapper Griffin'd have had me dead in another wink if I hadn't jerked the trigger when I did, and that's straight. He began the trouble and kept pushing it on, while I tried to level with him. He'd been dopin' up with something, I think, but he didn't wiggle a wiggle when he pointed his gun. He was himself all right, and there's some comfort in knowing that. For I'd hate him to feel that the only man I ever killed wasn't responsible for himself. I've got a mighty tender conscience, whether you know it or not, and it's perfectly comfortable now. I'll take whatever the court gives me, and I won't whimper a whimper."

The first night he slept in the penitentiary his attorney was delivering in the levee district a message to his friends. "Hump yourselves to get Van Alstine elected governor," was the burden of it. The levee gang did not know exactly what to think, but they were sufficiently well acquainted with Mr. Dawson to accept the instructions in good faith.

Mr. Dawson's message was entirely responsible for their action. To the contrary, it was only an important drop in a tolerably large tub of political ends. Their own candidate had "done them dirt" quite by chance, certainly not by intention. He had allied himself in a moment of mistaken wisdom with the prohibitionists. They were engaged in hesitating and grumbling and scowling when Mr. Dawson's message came, throwing the balance over to the Van Alstine side. Sidewheel Dawson never did anything without a good reason, but what his reason was in this particular instance they could not conjecture. They were still in the dark on the day when Mr. Dawson unexpectedly and triumphantly returned.

"Say," said he after the first wave of welcome had passed and he was sitting comfortably in the rear room at Muggsy Kelly's place with a number of old and tried associates about him. "I'm owin' you boys a lot for the way you helped old Van to the puddin'. I was a bit leary you wouldn't get next to what I was up to, but it didn't cost nothing to try."

"We didn't get next. We ain't next yet," candidly observed Mr. Kelly. "Is Van a particular friend of yours?"

Mr. Dawson smiled. "No," he replied, "but he's got reason for believin' me when I tell him I shot Snapper Griffin 'cause Snapper Griffin was dead set on givin' me the long trip and for no other reason."

"We believe that," said Mr. Kelly. "We knowed your story was true, but we couldn't do nothin'."

"Course you couldn't. If any of you had stuck your nose into the game I'd have been queer to the limit. Likely I'd have got the drop and gurgled, and then Van couldn't have reached me even if his gratitude was twice as long."

"Then Van was owin' you something?" Mr. Kelly and the others looked at Mr. Dawson with a common expression of curiosity and admiration mingled. "You've got us in the air, Sidewheel. Take us down or we'll bust."

Mr. Dawson laughed this time and rubbed his hands together. "Sure, I'll take you down," he said. "I won't take me long to do it either. Muggsy, do you remember a little job we had on six years ago this summer down at Bayville, when?"

"When you was out all night and got nothin' but a pair of red eyes and a fit of sickness and a stink of gas?" Mr. Kelly put in. "Yes, I remember. I almost lost me faith in you that time."

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"But—gratitude. It was the rumination of the life. I followed the lay just as you'd give it to me. I went through the first floor first, gatherin' up stuff worth maybe a tenner of hundred. If I'd quit right there I'd—well, I'd be lookin' forward to fifteen more years of it 'stead of bein' here with me future before me bright as paste. But everything was so nice and quiet I just says to myself, 'I'll tear the next door.' So I ples me stuff by the grand exit, where I can pick it up when I strolls out, and climb the stairs."

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"And then—I waited. What else was there to do? I couldn't sneak, leavin' things that way, could I? I'd have been ashamed to look an honest man in the face forevermore if I'd done that. And after awhile I hears a pattering in the hall and a dopy voice say, 'Seems to me I smell gas.' 'You're dead right, me friend,' I calls. 'Hustle in here and don't strike a gim for your life!'"

"And then I has the pleasure of makin' the acquaintance of the Hon. James Van Alstine. He's in his pajamas, and his hair is tousled, and his feet have no covers, and his eyes are blinky. 'The two minutes maybe before he can shake himself together. The first question he asks is a double header. 'Who are you, and what is the meanin' of this?' he says. 'I'm a thief,' says I, 'and the young lady on the bed there is one, too—at least she's been tryin' to rob the world of her presence.' 'Oh, horror!' says he, 'sees what's up.' 'And what are you doin'?' 'I'm holdin' me thumb over this gas well,' says I, 'and I'm gettin' weary.' 'Oh,' says he, and he skins over to the bedside, up starin' like a wild thing. Then he turns to me again. 'How long have you been here?' he says. 'I don't know,' says I, 'but plenty long enough."

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"And then?" Mr. Kelly had planted his elbows upon the table, contemplating Mr. Dawson fixedly.

"And then—I waited. What else was there to do? I couldn't sneak, leavin' things that way, could I? I'd have been ashamed to look an honest man in the face forevermore if I'd done that. And after awhile I hears a pattering in the hall and a dopy voice say, 'Seems to me I smell gas.' 'You're dead right, me friend,' I calls. 'Hustle in here and don't strike a gim for your life!'"

"And then I has the pleasure of makin' the acquaintance of the Hon. James Van Alstine. He's in his pajamas, and his hair is tousled, and his feet have no covers, and his eyes are blinky. 'The two minutes maybe before he can shake himself together. The first question he asks is a double header. 'Who are you, and what is the meanin' of this?' he says. 'I'm a thief,' says I, 'and the young lady on the bed there is one, too—at least she's been tryin' to rob the world of her presence.' 'Oh, horror!' says he, 'sees what's up.' 'And what are you doin'?' 'I'm holdin' me thumb over this gas well,' says I, 'and I'm gettin' weary.' 'Oh,' says he, and he skins over to the bedside, up starin' like a wild thing. Then he turns to me again. 'How long have you been here?' he says. 'I don't know,' says I, 'but plenty long enough."

"We believe that," said Mr. Kelly. "We knowed your story was true, but we couldn't do nothin'."

"Course you couldn't. If any of you had stuck your nose into the game I'd have been queer to the limit. Likely I'd have got the drop and gurgled, and then Van couldn't have reached me even if his gratitude was twice as long."

"Then Van was owin' you something?" Mr. Kelly and the others looked at Mr. Dawson with a common expression of curiosity and admiration mingled. "You've got us in the air, Sidewheel. Take us down or we'll bust."

Mr. Dawson laughed this time and rubbed his hands together. "Sure, I'll take you down," he said. "I won't take me long to do it either. Muggsy, do you remember a little job we had on six years ago this summer down at Bayville, when?"

"When you was out all night and got nothin' but a pair of red eyes and a fit of sickness and a stink of gas?" Mr. Kelly put in. "Yes, I remember. I almost lost me faith in you that time."

"Yes," Mr. Dawson chuckled immoderately. "I was to drive what I got from the place that dead easy place with the open cellar windows when you was strollin' home from church. I was to drive, and I got

nothin' but—" He suddenly assumed a reflective attitude, his hand upon his smoothly shaven chin, his gaze upon the ceiling.

"But what?" Mr. Kelly spoke with the sharpness of a long starved and desperate inquisitiveness.

"But—gratitude. It was the rumination of the life. I followed the lay just as you'd give it to me. I went through the first floor first, gatherin' up stuff worth maybe a tenner of hundred. If I'd quit right there I'd—well, I'd be lookin' forward to fifteen more years of it 'stead of bein' here with me future before me bright as paste. But everything was so nice and quiet I just says to myself, 'I'll tear the next door.' So I ples me stuff by the grand exit, where I can pick it up when I strolls out, and climb the stairs."

"And the first thing I know I'm takin' part in a high life tragedy drama. 'Twasn't no supe part either; 'twas the role of the hero that drops in when he's least expected and saves the whole cheese. I opens the first door I comes to, and I nearly faints owin' to gas. The room was full of it, and I closed the door, standin' for a minute with me hand on the knob, thinkin'. 'Twas no picnic of mine, of course, but I couldn't help feelin' that somethin' was wrong—that somebody was tryin' to croak and that it was up to me to save 'em if they was to be saved. That settles it. I draws